

Equality Impact Assessment Form

screeintip-sectionA

1. Document Control

1. Control Details

Title:	Enforced Sale Policy and Procedure for empty properties and vacant land
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Strategic Budget EIA: Y/N	N
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2. Document Amendment Record

Version	Author	Date	Approved
1	Martin Cooke	11 th May 2020	
2	Martin Cooke	2 nd June 2020	3 rd June 2020

3. Contributors/Reviewers

Name	Position	Date
Nasreen Miah	Equality & Employability Consultant	26 th May 2020
Nasreen Miah	Equality & Employability Consultant	3 rd June 2020

4. Glossary of Terms

Term	Description

[screentip-sectionB](#)

2. Assessment

1. Brief description of proposal / policy / service being assessed

To enforce the sale of empty houses and vacant land where relevant debts exist to recover the debts and bring the property onto the market with the likelihood of re-occupation.

This Policy outlines how the Council will approach the recovery of debts which are secured by a land charge. This is specific to long term unoccupied properties and land and does not attempt in to deal with occupied properties at all. The approach has been used once in the past and was successful in putting a property on the market which was severely affecting the neighbourhood, it was subsequently renovated and reoccupied and didn't require any further intervention.

The current debt recovery process is not effective in many cases where owners have often abandoned the empty property or land or it's not clear who the owner is. Finance staff try to contact debtors and persuade them to pay and warnings/reminders are sent out but further recovery is not normally undertaken. If further recovery were undertaken this would involve either civil proceedings or using a debt recovery agency; this route could result in more serious impacts on the debtor than the loss of a property that they are not actively using or don't know or acknowledge that they own.

Enforced sale provides a cost effective and often less invasive method of recovering debts with a very positive benefit for housing supply and the local neighbourhood once the property/land is brought back into use.

[screeintip-sectionC](#)

2. Information used to analyse the effects on equality:

There is no statistical data held that helps to analyse equality impacts. Officers believe that in many cases the owners will benefit as, from experience, they have often abandoned the property because they have found it too difficult to cope with but sometimes feel some sort of tie to the property that stops them from selling it. Although the initial sale may be concerning, once the property is no longer theirs and they no longer have to pay running costs and in many cases have some income from the sale, they will feel a real benefit from the action.

Eight notices under the Act have been served recently and in no cases have any of the owners come back to us with any comments or complaints relating to equality in any way. Neither have any objected in any other way. One owner who officers visited about the further deterioration to their property recently expressed their seeming hatred of the empty property and said that they didn't want to go see it again.

3. Impacts and Actions:

<u>screeintip-sectionD</u>	Could particularly benefit X	May adversely impact X
People from different ethnic groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Men	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Women	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disabled people or carers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy/ Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People of different faiths/ beliefs and those with none.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lesbian, gay or bisexual people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Older	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Younger	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (e.g. marriage/ civil partnership, looked after children, cohesion/ good relations, vulnerable children/ adults).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Please underline the group(s) /issue more adversely affected or which benefits.</i>		

<p style="text-align: right;"><u>screeentip-sectionE</u></p> <p>How different groups could be affected (Summary of impacts)</p>	<p style="text-align: right;"><u>screeentip-sectionF</u></p> <p>Details of actions to reduce negative or increase positive impact (or why action isn't possible)</p>
<p>Provide details for impacts / benefits on people in different protected groups.</p> <p>The owners of empty properties\land are unlikely to fall into any specific protected group, there is no data recorded relating to this but from the team's experience of the owners of properties that are likely to be subject to enforced sale they are a widely diverse group with a mixture of racial backgrounds although, we believe, predominantly white British. They tend to be older people but younger people tend not to own multiple properties.</p> <p>The owners will be impacted through the sale of their property in order to repay a debt incurred in securing, making safe or otherwise managing a property that they have failed to maintain or manage effectively. The debt recovery process and the</p>	<p>1 Actions will need to be uploaded on Pentana.</p> <p>None</p>

enforced sale process means that they will have already been given many months or even years to pay the debts off or engage with the Council to explore other repayment options. Each case is reviewed by the manager of the service area who deal with empty homes before being further reviewed by legal services when they are instructed.

There will be no financial loss as the owner will be entitled to the value of the property minus the debts and any necessary costs in disposing of the property. Officer's experience is that properties and land planning to be sold in this way have often been in the ownership of an individual for many years and have therefore usually increased in value. Of the 8 properties being

Positive impacts will be experienced by people wishing to acquire property in Nottingham City and for the people who occupy the property after the process is complete. It is not known whether these people will fall into any specific protected group but it is likely that this will be a widely diverse group. Nottingham City Council's housing strategy 'Quality Homes For All' details the need for housing within the City and the economic and social benefits, amongst others, of having an adequate housing supply. Housing supply, population statistics etc. are regularly monitored by the Housing Strategy team. The team managing Empty Homes regularly checks the turnover of properties and has targets to be instrumental in bringing at least 100 back into use each year.

4. Outcome(s) of equality impact assessment:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No major change needed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adjust the policy/proposal
<input type="checkbox"/>	Adverse impact but continue	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stop and remove the policy/proposal

5. Arrangements for future monitoring of equality impact of this proposal / policy / service:

None

6. Approved by Richard Taylor (0115 8761458 richard.taylor@nottinghamcity.gov.uk) and Date sent to equality team for publishing:

<p>Approving Manager: The assessment must be approved by the manager responsible for the service/proposal. Include a contact tel & email to allow citizen/stakeholder feedback on proposals.</p>	<p>Date sent for scrutiny: Send document or Link to: equalityanddiversityteam@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</p>
<p>SRO Approval: Richard Taylor</p>	<p>Date of final approval:</p>

Before you send your EIA to the Equality and Community Relations Team for scrutiny, have you:

1. Read the guidance and good practice EIA's
<http://intranet.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/media/1924/simple-guide-to-eia.doc>
2. Clearly summarised your proposal/ policy/ service to be assessed.
3. Hyperlinked to the appropriate documents.
4. Written in clear user-friendly language, free from all jargon (spelling out acronyms).
5. Included appropriate data.
6. Consulted the relevant groups or citizens or stated clearly, when this is going to happen.
7. Clearly cross-referenced your impacts with SMART actions.